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MY CONNECTION

WITH

THE ATLAS NEWSPAPER; 218

INCLUDING A 460

SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE AMORY HALL
PARTY OF 1838,

AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE

SENATORIAL AND REPRESENTATIVE ELECTIONS

IN THE CITY OF BOSTON FOR THE YEAR 1839,

SO FAR AS THE QUESTION OF SUSTAINING THE LICENSE LAW
OF 1838 WAS INVOLVED THEREIN.

15-10
By R. HILDRETH,

Late Contributor to the Atlas newspaper; Secretary to the Amory Hall
Committee, and Member of the Advisory Committee of the Boston Temper-
ance Association for the year 1839.

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HISTORY OF THE AMORY HALL PARTY OF 1838,

AND OF THE ELECTIONS FOR SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES
IN THE CITY OF BOSTON, IN 1839.

As the nature of the connection which has heretofore existed between the Atlas newspaper and myself, and the course, in relation to the choice of senators and representatives for the county of Suffolk and the city of Boston, which within a year past I and others have seen fit to pursue, seems in general not to be well understood, even among my friends and acquaintances, and has been greatly and maliciously misrepresented by my opponents, I esteem it a piece of justice to myself and others, to offer the following statement and explanations.

The Atlas newspaper was first established in 1832. I was then very young, having lately been admitted as an attorney at the Suffolk bar. At the time the paper was established, the whole property in and responsibility for it, rested with Mr. John H. Eastburn, well known as the city printer. I had a contingent interest in the copy-right, to commence at the expiration of two years, should the paper be continued after that time. I also received a small annual salary, in consideration of which I contracted to furnish the leading editorial articles. Richard Haughton, the present proprietor of the Atlas, came on from New York in virtue of an arrangement made with him by Mr. Eastburn, to act as head of the news and miscellaneous departments, and as general editor. At first he had no interest in the paper, but was employed upon a salary. The paper had been got up, and all the arrangements made, previous to his arrival, by Mr. Eastburn and myself.

After some time, Mr. Haughton became a proprietor in the paper jointly with Mr. Eastburn; and before the expiration of the two years, Mr. Eastburn sold out his whole interest, and retired from the concern altogether, nor has he since that time been connected with it in any shape, to my knowledge.

After the expiration of the two years, in virtue of the agreement above referred to, I became a proprietor in the paper to a small extent, and continued, under a new agreement, to furnish a certain part of the editorial matter for some two or three months, when I sold out my interest to Mr. Haughton, withdrew from the paper altogether, went to the South for the benefit of my health, and was absent from the State for some eighteen months.

I was partially induced to adopt this course, in consequence of Mr. Haughton's determination to bring forward and sustain Mr. Webster as the Whig presidential candidate, a procedure in the policy of which I did not concur. It was at this time that the paper was enlarged, to the eight dollar size, it having previously been a five dollar paper; and Mr. John O. Sargent, now in the New York Courier and Enquirer, was announced in its columns, as associate editor.

Before going any farther, I here claim the liberty of making a few observations upon my contributions to the Atlas, during this, my first period of connection with it.

Almost all the leading editorial articles were written by myself. They were for the most part short and pointed. Either from their spirit and vivacity, or for some other cause, they were very generally copied by our exchange papers, and I soon enjoyed the satisfaction—and to so young a writer, it was a satisfaction—of seeing my own articles coming back from the banks of the Ohio and Mississippi where they had been reprinted.

At the time the Atlas began to be published, the affairs of the Whig party had fallen into great confusion. In 1831, the Antimasons had first appeared in this Commonwealth, as a distinct political party. They had thrown 13,650 votes for Mr. Lathrop, their candidate for governor, while the Jackson party had given Judge Morton 12,173 votes. Governor Lincoln had received 29,160 votes, and was elected by a majority of only 3,537. This was the first serious opposition made to the reelection of Governor Lincoln, and may be considered as the first decided outbreak of political warfare in this Commonwealth, after the five years' calm which had been superinduced by the amalgamation of parties in 1825.

In the following year (1832), at the election which took place a few months after the Atlas was established, Governor Lincoln received 34,154, while the united votes of Morton and Lathrop amounted to 30,106, leaving Lincoln a majority of less than four thousand votes, and that too with all the aid he derived from the circumstance that presidential electors were that year chosen. Previous to the next election (that of 1833), Governor Lincoln announced his intention to be no longer a candidate. The Antimasons, who were a strong and growing party, had prevailed on John Q. Adams, ex-president of the United States, to be their candidate, and the Whigs or National Republicans as they were then called, were in the greatest state of uncertainty and doubt as to the policy which they ought to pursue. Many were for yielding at once. Relinquishing all hope of electing a candidate of their own, they were for adopting the candidate of the Antimasonic party, and thus in fact surrendering at discretion. No newspaper, and no leader of the party had yet recommended any decided course; indeed it was generally understood, and I believe correctly, that Mr. Webster, and the two Mr. Everetts,—

for at that time Mr. Alexander Everett was a leader of the National Republican party—though they were cautious of committing themselves publicly, were yet in private decidedly in favor of going for Mr. Adams.

Reflecting upon this state of affairs, it appeared to me exceedingly clear, that if the National Republicans adopted the Antimasonic nomination, and thus voluntarily concurred to place the affairs of the State under the management of the Antimasonic leaders, it would be all over with the National Republicans as a separate party. It appeared to me that if that party was to be sustained as a distinct organization, it was absolutely necessary to have a distinct candidate. After some consultation upon the subject with Mr. Haughton and a few others,—for at that time neither of us had many acquaintances in the city,—I took that ground in the paper, and wrote quite a number of articles to show the policy, and indeed the absolute necessity of nominating a distinct National Republican candidate. The idea took with the public, and quite a number of communications were soon sent in, to support the ground we had taken. I well remember several, which produced a great effect, from the pen of the late William Sullivan.

On the other hand, and as always happens in such cases, the policy we had indicated, and the Atlas itself, were denounced in certain quarters with great vehemence and severity. It was at this time, if I recollect right, that Mr. Webster uttered his celebrated malediction against the Atlas, which the Advocate was afterward so fond of quoting, and which it was impossible for the Atlas to deny. Notwithstanding this opposition, it appeared to be the decided opinion of a majority of the National Republican party, that a separate candidate ought to be nominated. A State Convention of the National Republicans had been called to meet at Worcester. At the meeting held in this city for the choice of delegates to that Convention, it happened by a somewhat singular coincidence that *George Bond* was chairman of the meeting, and *Richard Hildreth*, secretary. At this time it had been generally understood and agreed that JOHN DAVIS of Worcester should be the candidate of the National Republicans, provided he could be prevailed upon to accept the nomination.

Mr. Haughton was a delegate to that convention, and if I recollect right, was one of the committee appointed to wait upon Mr. Davis, to inform him of his nomination. It was only by much entreaty, and by the assurance repeatedly made to him, that only by his acceptance of the nomination, could the existence of the Whig party be preserved, that Mr. Davis was prevailed upon to stand as a candidate for governor. The Atlas supported his claims with very great zeal. The election came on, and Mr. Davis received 25,149 votes, John Q. Adams had 18,274, and Judge Morton 15,493. There was no election by the people, and the Whig party was in a minority of upwards of

eight thousand votes. Mr. Davis, however, was chosen by the Legislature, and at the next election (1834), by which time the National Republicans had assumed the name of *Whigs*, he received 44,802 votes, a clear majority of more than *fourteen thousand* over all other candidates.

It was the bringing forward of John Davis as a candidate for governor, which secured to the Whigs that supremacy which they have since enjoyed in this Commonwealth. Whether in the part I had in that matter, I rendered the Whig party any service or not, the reader can judge.

There is only one other series of articles which I wrote for the Atlas during the first period of my connection with it, to which I think it necessary here to allude. That series of articles related to the constitution, and more especially to the *practices* of the Whig Ward and County Nominating Convention. Those articles were not published editorially, but as communications.

The Whig Ward and County Convention was chosen and constituted at that time, very much, if not exactly, as it is at present. A very corrupt and dangerous practice however, had grown up in that convention, of selecting the candidates for public office from among its own members, so that there was scarcely a single person in the whole body whom the Convention did not nominate either for Senator, Representative, or Alderman of the city.

The nominations made in that body were thus reduced to a perfect system of intrigue and log-rolling. Whoever desired to be nominated for any office, had only to get himself appointed a member of the Ward or County Committees,—and the election of the members of those committees rested at that time in the hands of a very small knot of politicians. He was then in a condition to negotiate with his brother members for such a nomination as he might desire, it being tacitly understood that he, in his turn, was to help them in the same way. In the series of articles above referred to, I attacked this whole system with a good deal of vigor. Nor was the attack altogether without effect. The rottenness and danger of the existing system needed only to be exposed, to be seen by every body, and at the meeting held in 1834, for electing the members of the County Committee, a series of resolutions was introduced and after much debate was adopted, in which it was provided among other things, that no member of the Ward and County Convention, should be nominated by that body as a candidate for any office. The excellence of this reform has been attested by the re-adoption, in each successive year to the present time, of this same resolution, in the very same terms in which it was originally offered. Whether in contributing as I did to call the public attention to this important point, I rendered any service to the Whig party, I say again, let the reader judge.

After closing my first connection with the Atlas, I left the city

of Boston, towards the end of September, 1834, and was absent some eighteen months, during the greater part of the time in the territory of Florida. During my residence in Florida, the only contributions which I made to the *Atlas* consisted of a series of letters written in December, 1835, and January, 1836, giving a description of the territory, and a history of the origin and first exploits of the Seminole war, a war which has since become so costly and so celebrated, but which was regarded, when it began, more as a matter of jest than earnest. I returned to Boston in April, 1836, where, however, I did not stop, but proceeded immediately to my mother's residence, in Gloucester, where I remained for about ten months. In consequence, however, of an article which I sent to Mr. Haughton as a communication for his paper, soon after my arrival at Gloucester, at his suggestion and request, I entered into an arrangement with him, by which I agreed to contribute at the rate of two articles a week, to his paper. These articles were written in Gloucester and sent by mail to Boston. Mr. Haughton perfectly understood at that time, that there were certain points in the course which the paper had adopted during my absence, in the propriety or policy of which I did not concur. He knew also that upon some points, in the policy which he was then pursuing,—and especially in his zeal for Mr. Webster, as a presidential candidate,—I differed from him. It was however arranged between us, that I should write only upon those subjects as to which we agreed.

In consequence of this arrangement, I wrote the series of articles upon Texas,—the first articles, I believe, which gave the *Atlas* any character beyond that of a zealous and spirited partizan journal,—and which first attracted to it the favorable notice of persons who were something more, or something less, than mere party politicians. Following in the same track, I furnished additional articles, upon the Seminole war, the Creek wars, and our relations with the Cherokees,—subjects at that time of high interest, and which my residence at the South enabled me to discuss with a certain degree of intelligence. At the time I set up no claim, either public or private, to the authorship of those articles; nor did I think it a matter of any particular consequence, till I afterwards discovered that other people were claiming, or at least were enjoying, a certain degree of reputation founded upon their authorship, and which of right belonged to me.

In February, 1837, I came to Boston and made a new arrangement with Mr. Haughton, to commence on the first of March, by virtue of which I was to furnish editorial matter as before, and in addition was to report the proceedings of the several courts of law for the *Atlas*. This arrangement continued in force for about six months, or till the first of September following.

During all this period, Mr. John O. Sargent had been in the paper, and had acted as its principal political editor. About the first of September, 1837, he made an arrangement to become a

joint editor of the New York Courier & Enquirer, in consequence of which he left the Atlas, and quitted Boston.

I now entered into a new agreement with Mr. Haughton, by which I undertook to furnish the main part of the editorial matter of the paper, it being, however, perfectly understood between him and me, that the whole control of the paper, and the whole responsibility for it, rested with him; and that if at any time he saw fit to take a course, or to promulgate opinions, in which I did not concur, he was at perfect liberty to do so, with the understanding, however, that I was not to be expected to contribute in any way, towards the support of opinions which I did not entertain.

Soon after this new arrangement, I proceeded to Washington, to attend the extra session of the Twenty-fifth Congress. I was at Washington also during the larger part of the long session of that Congress, until about the middle of April, 1838, when I returned to Boston. During my residence at Washington, I not only furnished quite as full and complete account of all the debates of both Houses, as was given by any other Washington correspondent, but I furnished also a large proportion of the editorial articles of the Atlas, including all those upon the right of petition, the issue of treasury notes, and the proposed Sub Treasury, besides many others on the position and tendency of parties, and especially concerning the course of Mr. Calhoun and his friends, the conjectures of which were received with much incredulity at the time, but which have since, in a great measure, turned out to have been well founded.

During my residence at Washington, from September, 1837, to April, 1838, Mr. Eppes Sargent, now of the New York Mirror, was connected with the editorial department of the Atlas, and rendered it essential service. Upon my return to Boston, Mr. Sargent went to New York; and from April, 1838, to November 20th, now last past, a very great proportion of the articles which have appeared in the editorial columns of the Atlas have been of my composition. Among these articles, I may mention that series which attracted such general attention, on the nomination to be made by the Harrisburg Convention, and on the propriety of selecting General Harrison as the Whig candidate. All the articles, on this subject, except some three or four, in which it was judged necessary to take the back track, were written by me.

I have heretofore disavowed all responsibility, for the general course of the Atlas, nor have I ever possessed any control over that course, except so far as my advice might go. Such inconsistencies, then, as the paper may have been guilty of, must not be ascribed to me. Some such there are, but I never advised nor consented to them. And, on the other hand, if there have at any time appeared any inconsistencies between my opinions and actions, and the doctrines which that paper has inculcated, neither the Atlas nor Mr. Haughton can be held in any sense responsible therefor, any more than the paper or its proprietor is responsible

for the opinions and actions of the clerks, compositors or pressmen, employed in its publication. My name had never been announced as an editor, and that I contributed to the paper in any way was not generally known except to a certain number of hangers-on about the office, who were indeed exceedingly mistaken if they supposed, that for a salary of fifteen hundred dollars a year, I sold not a certain portion of my time only, but my freedom of opinion, and my independent right to act. To such a servitude I hope never to be obliged to submit. Let me do Mr. Haughton the justice to state, that he never for a moment, placed any such construction upon our contract, and that in all the transactions that have ever passed between us, he has always conducted towards me, with that scrupulous delicacy which is the first characteristic of a gentleman.

Independent of certain less important differences of opinion which had always existed between Mr. Haughton and myself, the great difference between us, and that which has led more immediately to my late disconnection with the Atlas, grew out of the License Law of 1838.

That act was passed while I was at Washington. I know nothing of its history or its parentage, except what appeared in the newspapers at that time. I read those accounts with great interest. I made up my mind that the law was a good law, and I resolved, if it were necessary, to do all I could to sustain it.

When I returned to Boston, I found that the passage of that law had produced a great excitement, which however at that time was far less apparent than it has since become. Mr. Haughton communicated to me the state of public sentiment with respect to that law. He stated to me that all his sympathies were against the law, though he considered its passage or its repeal as a matter of slight consequence compared with the sustentation of the Whig party. With the view of preventing the differences of opinion which had grown out of that law from producing a division in the Whig party, he esteemed it, for the present, the wise and politic course to say nothing whatever upon the subject, and thus to give the existing agitation a chance to subside. I stated, on the other hand, that all my sympathies were in favor of the law, and that I meant to do my best for its support; but under the circumstances, I concurred in the policy of letting the subject rest, and agreed to the suppression of a paragraph which I had written, in which the law was spoken of with favor.

So the matter remained, till about the 1st of October, at which time, the annual notice of a public meeting for the election of County Committee for the County of Suffolk, appeared in the newspapers. At this time Mr. Haughton was absent in Pennsylvania. It had come to my ears, that the opponents of the License Law of 1838, who began about that time to take the name of *Liberals*, had adopted, according to what

they considered wise advice, the following plan of operations, to wit, the getting possession of the Whig primary meetings, the filling up the County and Ward Nominating Committees with people of their own selection, so as to exclude from nomination every person known or suspected to be friendly to the obnoxious law. In the course of the summer, it was more than once intimated to me, that I might secure my election to the House of Representatives, if I would only come out against that law, a proposition which of course I steadily rejected. The plan of the Liberals was the more objectionable from the fact, that their party, and the Committee in which their course of action was agreed upon, was composed in part of Van Buren men, so that in point of fact the nominations of the Whig party were to be made or controlled, by a committee composed partly of Van Buren men, through the aid and procurement of the part of that committee, who had hitherto classed themselves as Whigs.

Such proceedings I esteemed highly dangerous, not to the cause of temperance alone, but to the character and even to the existence of the Whig party, and I at once resolved to do all that I could to prevent their execution. I accordingly called upon Mr. Philip Greely, Jr. and Mr. Albert Fearing, two active members of the Whig party, in whose judgment and good intentions, I had confidence, and having stated to them what I knew and what I feared, I requested them to act with me, in endeavoring to prevent the seizure and prostitution of the Whig Nominating Convention, which I understood to be threatened. To this proposition they readily acceded, and after having held some conversation with several friends of the Law of 1838, in order that I might understand their views, and be in some degree able to speak in their behalf, Mr. Fearing, Mr. Greely, and myself called together upon Mr. Abel Phelps, whom we considered as one of the principal heads of the Liberal party, and afterwards, in company with Mr. Phelps, and at his suggestion, upon Mr. Daniel L. Gibbens. These persons received us with courtesy, and showed some disposition to enter into a negotiation. But we soon discovered that very little could be accomplished in that way. The claim which we set up in behalf of the friends of the Law of 1838, was exceedingly moderate. We undertook to guarantee in their names, that they would be content with *ten* or even *six* friends of the law upon the representative ticket. The negotiators on the other side, with an apparent exultation in their own strength, refused us even *one*.

Perceiving that nothing could be done in the way of negotiation, I immediately began to make preparations to prevent the Liberals from taking possession, by force, of the meeting for the choice of County Committee. I had however but one or two days for preparations, and several of those whom I called in to my assistance, when the struggle came on proved faithless if not treacherous.

The meeting for the choice of County Committee was held at

the Temple. At an early hour the front seats were occupied by the leaders and followers of the Liberals, among whom were to be noted many who had seldom or never been seen before at a Whig caucus. The back part of the hall was filled with citizens, most of whom were totally opposed to the proceedings which took place, but who were without any preconcert or mutual understanding, and who could effect nothing against the preconcerted arrangements and vociferous noise of the Liberals.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Henry Edwards, who had been re-appointed by the Legislative caucus, chairman of the County Committee for Suffolk, and who, according to all usage before or since, was entitled to preside over the proceedings of the meeting. But Mr. Edwards did not suit the ideas of those persons who had volunteered to manufacture a County Committee for the Whigs. Accordingly, he was very unceremoniously thrust from the chair, and Mr. James T. Austin, who happened to be present, was chosen in his place. The Committee, upon motion of Mr. Philip Marrett, and after some discussion, then proceeded to adopt certain resolutions, a portion of which, however, were directly in the teeth of the course which those who controlled the meeting immediately afterwards pursued.

It had been customary always hitherto, that the chairman of the meeting should nominate a preliminary committee of two from each Ward; this preliminary committee had been accustomed to retire for consultation, and afterward to report to the meeting the names of four persons from each ward. Out of these four from each ward, it had been usual for the meeting to select two from each ward, by *marking*, and the two from each ward having the highest number of marks, constituted the County Committee. Such had always heretofore been the method of proceeding.

I was strongly desirous of fixing upon Mr. Austin the appointment of the preliminary committee, for I knew well that he would not and could not appoint other than a fair one. I made the motion accordingly, after having stated the uniform practice; but being opposed by Mr. Gibbens, my motion was forthwith indignantly rejected, and it was decided that the committee should be appointed by nomination at large.

The Liberals were all well provided with *printed lists*, from which they read off the names, as nominations for the preliminary committee were called for. But so great was the clamor and confusion, that the chairman had the utmost difficulty in distinguishing any name at all. Fortunately, however, one of the secretaries, himself if I mistake not a distinguished member of the Liberal committee, had a *printed list* of his own, by the help of which he was enabled to suggest to the chairman the names which he *ought* to hear.

In this way, amid noise, confusion and uproar, the committee

was made up, being composed with but one or two, if with any, exceptions, of the very names borne on the printed list above mentioned. For if by chance, the chairman happened to hear the name of any individual not borne on that list,—and I for one, took a station directly under his nose, and bawled out, at the top of my voice, whenever nominations were called for, the names of those persons whom I and my friends had agreed upon as proper to constitute the preliminary committee,—if by any chance I say, the chairman happened to hear the name of any person not on the printed list, and proposed it to the meeting, it was immediately voted down, to however good a Whig it might belong, and the name on the printed list was substituted.

In this manner the preliminary committee was completed. Some question was made whether there were not some persons upon it who were not Whigs. But this inquiry was denounced as highly impertinent. The Liberals attempted to hiss me down for having made it, and the chairman himself seemed to think, that any inquiry into the past opinions of persons, was a matter of very little moment. One person however, nominated and appointed on this preliminary committee, who frankly confessed himself a Van Buren man, and who was afterwards nominated as a candidate for the House, on the *regular* Van Buren ticket, was excused from serving. One or two others made an exposition of their political faith, which the meeting adjudged to be satisfactory, and the preliminary committee retired.

In a few minutes they returned again with a list of four persons from each ward. The custom was and is, as I have before stated, that from these four persons, the meeting select two, *by marking*, to constitute the committee. I moved accordingly, that the meeting proceed to mark. Mr. Gibbens, who had much more influence with the meeting than I had, moved that the marking be dispensed with altogether, and that the first two named of the four from each ward, reported by the preliminary committee should constitute the County Committee. Somebody in the back part of the hall who suspected a trick, moved that the first and last named of the four from each ward reported by the preliminary committee should constitute the County Committee. Upon a signal given this motion was voted down, and the very extraordinary motion of Mr. Gibbens was carried by acclamation. When the names of the Committee thus appointed, came to be read off, it chanced, by some most extraordinary coincidence, that they corresponded exactly with those borne on a list several copies of which had been slyly handed about among the Liberals before the meeting was organized!

It thus happened that so far as the County Committee was concerned, the stratagem of the Liberals was completely successful. That body was composed precisely as they desired, and had agreed it should be.

The meetings for choosing the Ward Committees which in conjunction with the County Committee, constitute the Nominating Convention were held a few days after. In some of these meetings the Liberals followed up the same game which they had played at the Temple, and with the same success. In other wards, they were met and defeated by the neutral Whigs and the Temperance men. But in general the time was too short to admit in the wards, of any decisive measures of defence.

When the Nominating Convention came together, it was found to contain a small majority of pure Liberals. Of the minority, about one half consisted of Whigs strongly inclined to be Liberals, and the remaining half of pure Whigs, including a very small number of friends of the Law of 1838.

When the proceedings at the Temple became generally known, they excited throughout the city a pretty warm feeling of indignation and disgust on the part of all impartial and fair minded men. I waited for some days, in order to see if any other person would move in the matter. But nobody seemed disposed to undertake the labor and responsibility of getting up a regular opposition to the irregular Convention, of which the history is given above; and there seemed to be great danger that the excitement of the public mind would die away, and that the Whig party would tamely submit to the yoke which the Liberals had prepared for it. Under these circumstances, I esteemed it my duty to make a further move. After consulting with some friends, upon whose judgment I relied, I undertook the task of getting up a public meeting. This was no light or easy affair. After calling upon all the persons whom I could think of as likely to aid me, I could not find a single one who would give me an absolute pledge to speak at the meeting, and when I went there, I had no certain assurance that any one would speak except myself. The task of getting a chairman consumed many hours, nor should I ever have succeeded without the aid of Messrs. Henry Edwards and Edward Brooks who volunteered to assist me. I was indebted also to Mr. Edwards for much other useful assistance in the details of the meeting.

I prepared and published the notices, drew up the resolutions, and procured gentlemen to stand as members of the Committee of Vigilance and Correspondence, for the appointment of which the resolutions provided. The meeting was held at *Amory Hall* on the 10th of October, and was very respectably attended. Every thing passed off well. I offered the resolutions with some preliminary remarks, and Mr. Charles G. Loring supported them in a very able speech, in which he was followed with much zeal and force, by the venerable Alden Bradford and Mr. John Tappan. The resolutions were adopted unanimously. A Committee of Vigilance and Correspondence, consisting of one from each ward, was appointed by the meeting, to which the chairman and secretaries were added. This committee was afterwards well known as the *Amory Hall Committee*. A full account of the pro-

ceedings of this meeting with the resolutions and a report of the speeches, was afterwards published in a pamphlet.

The Amory Hall Committee held their first meeting on the 11th of October. George Bond was chosen *chairman*, and I volunteered for the office of *secretary*, to which I was appointed. *J. C. Converse* was chosen auditor, and *J. Thomas Stevenson*, treasurer. A sub-committee on finance was also appointed.

The first business after the choice of officers, was, to authorize a *circular letter*, to be sent into every town in the Commonwealth, stating what we had done, inquiring what the prospect was in each town, and advising some similar organization for securing the election of trustworthy representatives. Being authorized for that purpose, the secretary prepared and dispatched the above circular, to which he received encouraging replies from about one hundred towns.

At the second meeting, held October 16th, it was voted to enlarge the committee by the addition of one from each ward. Under this new organization the committee finally consisted of *thirty-two* members, as follows:

George Bond, Chairman.

Ward 1. Richard Austin, Bradley N. Cummings.

“ 2. Benjamin Brown, Matthew W. Green.

“ 3. William C. Brown, A. B. Snow.

“ 4. Edward Noyes, Thomas Patten, jr.

“ 5. Henry Plympton, Daniel Perkins.

“ 6. Loring Norcross, Aaron Jaquith.

“ 7. Isaac Parker, W. W. Stone.

“ 8. J. C. Converse, Charles Brown.

“ 9. B. P. Richardson, Caleb Coburn.

“ 10. Thomas D. Quincy, Charles Blake.

“ 11. William Willet, James F. Curtis.

“ 12. Francis Jackson, J. W. Gates.

South Boston. Alvin Simonds, Jeremy Drake.

East Boston. Eleazer Johnson, Solon F. Brown.

J. Thomas Stevenson, } Secretaries of the Amory Hall
T. R. Marvin, } Meeting.

R. Hildreth, Secretary of the Committee.

At this meeting a Committee of Publication, and a Committee of Distribution were appointed, and it was voted to publish and distribute ten thousand copies of the pamphlet above referred to, containing the proceedings of the meeting at Amory Hall. This pamphlet was prepared by the secretary and was published and distributed accordingly. At a subsequent meeting the Committee voted to publish and distribute another pamphlet, prepared by the secretary, and entitled, “*The Boston Opposition to the new law for the suppression of rum shops, and grog shops, fully detected and plainly exposed; being an appeal to the country people of Massachusetts to protect themselves.*” Of this pamphlet several thousand copies were printed and distributed.

A third pamphlet was likewise prepared by the secretary, and published and distributed at the expense of the Committee, containing the opinions of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, and of Chancellor Kent, on the constitutionality of laws for restraining and prohibiting the retail trade in ardent spirits.

Mr. Samuel Hubbard, having been nominated for the Senate, by the Whig Nominating Convention, and it being hoped and expected that his acceptance of that nomination might preclude any necessity, on the part of the Amory Hall Committee, of nominating a separate ticket for senators, at a meeting of that committee held on the 20th of October, a sub-committee of *three* was appointed to urge upon that gentleman the acceptance of the nomination which had been tendered to him by the Whig convention. In this mission, the sub-committee were unsuccessful. Mr. Hubbard declined to accept the nomination, and the Amory Hall committee were afterwards driven to the necessity of nominating a separate senatorial ticket.

The Whig Nominating Convention had placed an injunction of secrecy upon its members. The secretary of the Amory Hall Committee had succeeded, however, in obtaining a printed list of the persons nominated in that convention as proper for candidates for the House of Representatives. This list was laid before the Amory Hall committee at their meeting, on the 20th of October, whereupon it was voted, "to proceed to designate twenty-five persons (to be selected from the marking list of the Whig Convention), whom this Committee specially desires should be placed on the ticket of representatives to the General Court, to be made up by that Convention, any twenty of whom being placed upon that ticket, this committee will be satisfied therewith."

A list of twenty-five names was accordingly agreed to. A discussion then arose what should be done with it? It was thought that if it were formally sent to the Whig Convention in the name of the Amory Hall Committee, it might perhaps be rejected with insult, inasmuch as the Whig Convention claimed to be the true and only representative of the Whig party, and regarded, or pretended to regard, the Amory Hall committee as a mere factious rebel assembly. To avoid exposing the Committee to insult, and to escape the misunderstandings that might thence arise, it was judged best to place copies of the above mentioned list of twenty five, in the hands of several members of the Committee who were intimately connected with certain members of the Convention, to the end that the contents of the list might through their joint means, come informally but substantially, to the knowledge of the Convention.

This was accordingly done, though not to the full extent that had been intended. I for my part have no doubt that the leaders in the Convention were fully informed of the contents of that list. There afterwards grew, however, out of an allusion to this

matter in a speech subsequently made at Amory Hall by Mr. George Bond, when the Amory Hall ticket was presented there for approval,—a newspaper controversy of a somewhat malignant character, at least upon one side, between that gentleman and a Committee of the Whig Convention.

The Whig and Ward County Nominating Convention held their first meeting for the selection of candidates for the House of Representatives, on Tuesday evening, Oct 23. At the meeting of the Amory Hall Committee held the evening following (Oct 24), notwithstanding all the efforts of the Whig Convention, to keep their proceedings a secret, a correct copy of the marking list used by the Whig Convention, with the marks thereon was laid before the Amory Hall Committee, by the secretary.

It appeared from this list, that the Liberals had carried every thing before them. They had preconcerted matters in such a way, as to have marked in *forty-two* candidates at the first trial, every one of whom was known to entertain *liberal* opinions. Among the whole forty-two, there was not a single friend of the Law of 1838, nor a single person suspected of friendship for that law. Two only of this forty-two declined to accept the nomination, and there remained to be selected sixteen additional candidates.

This move on the part of the Nominating Convention satisfied every member of the Amory Hall Committee that the hope they had thus far clung to, of so much moderation and decency on the part of the Nominating Convention, as would prevent a double nomination, was utterly groundless, and the following resolution, which became the basis of all the future action of the Committee was unanimously adopted.

“Voted unanimously, that the information communicated this evening to this Committee, touching the doings of the Ward and County Convention, is such, as to make it expedient for this Committee to take immediate measures towards the nomination of a ticket of their own, for senators and representatives.”

It has been already mentioned that there were in the Whig Convention a small minority of persons, who were sincerely desirous to make that body act with impartiality and justice, so as to fulfil the proper end of its appointment. At the head of this small minority were Albert Fearing and Richard Haughton. I have already given an account of the transactions in which Mr. Fearing and myself had been jointly concerned previous to the meeting at the Temple. Subsequently to that meeting, Mr. Fearing had allowed himself to be chosen a member of the Ward Committee for Ward nine, and had taken his seat accordingly in the Nominating Convention. If I do not misrecollect, Mr. Fearing had resolved not to accept a seat in that body; but the unusual turn which things had taken, induced him to change that resolution, in hopes that he might exercise a salutary influence over the Convention; and the same reasons, if I mistake

not, induced him to take the chair in that body when it was tendered to him. He had formerly been chairman of the Convention during the years 1835 and 1836, and had fulfilled the duties of that station to general acceptance.

Mr. Haughton had for several years been annually chosen secretary of the Whig Convention, and at the organization of that body, he had been reëlected without opposition. At that time, however, he still continued absent in Pennsylvania, nor did he return till after the selection of the forty representative candidates as above narrated. Shortly after he took his seat in the Convention, and thenceforward acted as its secretary.

Mr. Fearing, Mr. Haughton, and those members of the Convention who acted with them, were greatly alarmed at the course taken in the nomination of the above forty candidates, and they set themselves seriously and laboriously to work, in order to procure as to the remaining sixteen candidates, such nominations as might be satisfactory to the Amory Hall Committee, and might prevent the bringing out of a separate ticket.

They exerted their utmost for the accomplishment of this object. But the Liberals were too strong for them, and when the trial came on in the Convention, they succeeded in marking in only six or seven of their men, while the Liberals carried the remaining nine or ten. In this way the Regular Ticket was completed, having upon it the names of but four or five avowed friends of the Law of 1838, while all the remainder of the ticket had the reputation of being hostile to that law.

As Mr. Fearing and his friends had exhausted so much labor to produce this slight modification of the ticket, they were naturally inclined somewhat to overrate its importance, and they seemed to think that it was the duty of the Amory Hall Committee to disband, and make no further opposition.

It is very true, that owing to the existence of the Amory Hall Committee, and to the exertions of Mr. Fearing and his friends, the Regular ticket had become a very different ticket from what it otherwise would have been. But even such as it had become, the Amory Hall Committee was by no means satisfied with it. After a careful scrutiny and examination, they could find only twenty names out of the fifty-six, on the regular representative ticket, that they could conscientiously recommend as fit candidates to those of their fellow citizens to whom they owed their appointment, and even of this twenty the greater portion were avowed enemies to the law. Twenty names, taken from the Regular ticket, were placed upon the Amory Hall ticket, to which thirty-six new names of the highest respectability were added.

The candidates having agreed to accept the nomination, this ticket was presented to a public meeting, held at Amory Hall on Saturday evening, Nov. 3d, and was then and there approved and accepted.

As the sub-committee on publication found it impossible to bring the whole case, between the Amory Hall Committee and the Whig Nominating Convention, fully before the public, in any of the existing public prints, they were under the necessity of establishing a temporary paper of their own. This paper was commenced on the 31st of October, and was published till the election. It was called the *True Whig*, and was extended to eight numbers. It contained a great amount of original matter, relating partly to the defence of the law of 1838, and partly to the merits of the political controversy, pending between the Whig Convention and the Amory Hall Committee. Of this paper a very large edition was published. It contained some home truths which gave great offence in certain quarters; but it served to make the merits of the controversy more generally known, and gained the Amory Hall party many adherents.

The Liberals of the Nominating Convention were not wanting on their part. They issued extra *Couriers* and extra *Centinels and Gazettes*, at the expense of the Convention, filled with the most *spirited* matter, which, however, it is to be suspected, did the Amory Hall party more benefit than damage.

The election took place on Monday, Nov. 12th. The result was somewhat as follows:

Regular Whig Ticket,.....	4000
Regular Van Buren Ticket,.....	2500
Amory Hall Ticket,.....	1700
Total,.....	<u>8200</u>

None were elected except the *twenty* borne conjointly on the Regular and Amory Hall tickets.

The Amory Hall Committee met the Wednesday after the election, and authorized a formal official offer to be made to the Whig Convention, to the effect that if that Convention would place upon such ticket as they might offer to the Whigs of Boston at the approaching second trial, to fill the *thirty-six* vacancies, *twelve* names taken from the Amory Hall ticket, then the Amory Hall Committee would agree to abandon their own ticket and would support the regular nomination. This proposal for a compromise was made officially through a sub-committee. It was rejected by the Whig Convention and that rejection was officially communicated to the Amory Hall Committee. At the second trial, the Whig Convention again brought forward their thirty-six rejected candidates, and the Amory Hall Committee proposed their thirty-six candidates who had not been elected. The result of the election was pretty much as follows:

Regular Whig Ticket,.....	3100
Amory Hall Ticket,.....	2100
Van Buren Ticket,.....	1800
Total,.....	<u>7000</u>

Of course there was no choice, nor could there by law, be another trial. It thus happened that in the Legislature of 1839, the city of Boston had but twenty representatives.

The Amory Hall Committee met for the last time on the 1st of December, 1838, and having passed a vote of thanks to George Bond, "for the manly and judicious manner in which he had discharged all the responsibilities which had devolved upon him as chairman," and appointed a committee of six to settle up its outstanding accounts, it adjourned without day.

The expenses of the Committee had amounted to upwards of a thousand dollars, which sum was collected by voluntary subscription. All the debts of the Committee were discharged prior to the 1st of January, 1839.

Such is the history of the Amory Hall party of 1838. I now proceed to give a very brief account of the representative election of 1839, so far as the question of sustaining the Law of 1838 was involved therein.

During the months of February and March, 1839, there was organized in this city a body called the Boston Temperance Association, consisting of committees in each ward, which committees united in a general meeting, constitute the Association.

Of the origin and early history of this Association, I am not particularly informed. I had no hand whatever in getting it up, nor did I know that such an undertaking was in progress; for during that winter and spring, I was incapacitated by personal indisposition and severe family affliction, from attending to any thing except my own affairs. The existence of such an Association, however, soon came to my knowledge. I joined it in April or May, took an active part in its business, and was soon after appointed a member of its Advisory Committee.

The annual primary meeting for the choice of the Whig County Committee has usually been held in the month of October. It rests in the discretion, however, of the chairman of the Committee, who is appointed by the annual Legislative Whig Caucus, to call together that primary meeting at any time he may think proper. Mr. Jonathan Chapman had been appointed by the Legislative caucus Chairman of the County Committee for the County of Suffolk, and in the month of June last he published a notice summoning the Whigs of the County to assemble at the Old Common Council Room, for the choice of County Committee. It was understood that he anticipated the usual time, by the advice of Mr. Fearing, Mr. Haughton and others, who thought, and probably with justice, that the earlier the Committee was chosen, the less likely that choice was to be attended with divisions and disputes.

Previous to the meeting, some interchange of opinion took place between Mr. Fearing and others who acted for what by way of distinction I shall denominate the *Regular Whigs*, and the leaders of the late Amory Hall party. The negotiators on

both sides had implicit confidence in the honor and impartiality of Mr. Chapman, and it was mutually agreed to return to the old way of electing the County Committee, such as had ever existed previous to the meeting in 1838 at the Temple.

The meeting at the Old Common Council was fully attended. The old Amory Hall party were fully represented. The Regular Whigs were present in force. It was only the ultra Liberals, who seemed to have absented themselves. Of those gentlemen who had carried matters with so high a hand at the Temple, scarce one was to be seen.

The meeting proceeded with the utmost harmony. By general consent, Mr. Chapman was appointed chairman, thus returning to the old custom which had been violated in the person of Mr. Edwards. By a unanimous vote the chairman was called upon to nominate a preliminary committee of *three* from each ward, to report to the meeting the names of four from each ward, from among whom the County Committee was to be chosen by marking. The number *three* was unusual. It had always before been *two*. This circumstance at first excited some suspicion. It turned out, however, to be wholly accidental. The preliminary committee was ordered to report at a future day; and the meeting adjourned to assemble again, on a day appointed, at the Temple, to receive the report, and to mark in the County Committee.

The most excellent spirit prevailed at this meeting, and it seemed to be generally agreed that for quieting the difficulties that had prevailed in the Whig party, growing out of the License Law of 1838, the members of the Whig Convention, as well as the senators and representatives to be nominated by that Convention should be equally divided between the friends and opponents of that law. There was no precise agreement of this sort, but such was the general understanding. The adjourned meeting at the Temple was very numerously attended and by the same sort of persons who had been present at the Old Common Council Room. The preliminary committee made their report, and the meeting proceeded to mark for members of the County Committee. Of the twenty-four thus selected, a small majority were persons who had belonged to the Amory Hall party.

The meetings in the wards, for the choice of ward committees, soon followed. In one or two of the wards, the ultra Liberals rallied, and carried the whole delegation. In one or two of the wards the whole delegation was carried by the Temperance party, but in general the delegations were pretty equally divided between the Amory Hall men on the one side, and the Regular Whigs and ultra Liberals on the other.

When the Whig Nominating Convention, thus elected, was called together, it was found to consist of three sub-divisions, viz., Temperance men, Regular Whigs, and ultra Liberals.

The first party was the largest, and the last was the smallest. The Regular Whigs held the balance of power.

The nomination of Senators was effected without difficulty. The Temperance men had three, among whom were the two senatorial candidates borne on the Amory Hall ticket, but not on the Regular Ticket of last year. The Liberals had three also, two of whom were from the Regular Ticket of last year.

The first marking for Representatives passed off pretty smoothly, and some forty-four candidates were selected, a small majority of whom were opposed to the Law of 1838. When the Convention met, to select the remaining candidates, a sharp struggle ensued. A majority of the Regular Whigs joined the ultra Liberals, and the ticket stood, when completed, *twenty-two* friends of the law to *thirty-four* opponents. In the mean time the Van Buren men had nominated a Regular Van Buren Ticket, composed almost entirely of Liberals. This state of things was forthwith reported to the Advisory and Executive Committee of the Boston Temperance Association, who held a meeting, called the Association together, and submitted a resolution to the effect, that as matters then stood, neither of the regular nominations was satisfactory to Temperance men, or entitled to their support.

Upon this resolution a very warm and spirited debate ensued. There was a large party in the Association, who wished to proceed immediately to the nomination of a pure Temperance ticket. At length, however, after a long debate, the resolution was referred back to the Executive and Advisory Committees for further consideration, with directions to report thereon at a future day.

In the meantime the Regular Whigs of the Convention seemed to have taken the alarm; for at a meeting of that body, called to fill up a number of vacancies on the ticket caused by the declination of several of the candidates, so many additional temperance men were put upon it, as to make up the whole number of twenty-eight, or half the entire ticket.

The Executive and Advisory Committees of the Temperance Association, being informed that the Whig Convention had acted up to the mutual understanding, and had divided the Whig ticket equally between the friends and the opponents of the law, resolved to report to the Association that it was not advisable for that body to take any steps in relation to the approaching election. This, however, was not done, till the Executive and Advisory Committees had received satisfactory assurances from certain responsible temperance members of the Whig party, that if a Liberal Whig ticket were brought out at the polls it would be there encountered by a Temperance Whig ticket.

It fell to my lot to make the above report to the Temperance Association. I was a candidate on the Whig representative ticket, and I knew very well that it was my policy, if I wished to be elected, to keep perfectly quiet and to say nothing either way. It is not my habit, however, to shrink from the performance of a

duty because that duty happens to be dangerous. I expounded the views of the Executive and Advisory Committees to the Association, and in consequence of it became instantly involved in a very warm, and on their part almost an acrimonious debate, with several of the more ultra members of the Association, who seemed inclined to look upon all compromises as little better than downright treachery to the cause. At one time it appeared probable that those who insisted that the Association should instantly bring out a pure Temperance ticket, would carry the day. But after a very hot debate, in which more than one attempt was made to silence me by clamors and hisses, more rational counsels prevailed, and the resolution which I had reported, was adopted by a large majority. It was this debate which lost me my election. I failed by only eight votes. Several members of the Association assured me that evening that they would never vote for me. I have the consolation, however, of reflecting, that my course on that occasion made sure the election of the other *twenty-seven* temperance men who were elected, and among whom I recognize not less than sixteen or twenty active members of the old Amory Hall party, including the two secretaries of the first Amory Hall meeting, Mr. T. R. Marvin, and Mr. T. S. Stevenson, to the latter of whom the Amory Hall committee had been very particularly indebted, both for judicious counsel, and efficient action.

I was one of that number of Temperance Whigs, who had given assurances to the Executive and Advisory Committee of the Boston Temperance Association, that if the Liberal Whigs brought out a separate ticket, that ticket should be met and counteracted at the polls by a Temperance Whig ticket. To make all sure, we had our ticket printed before hand, and when the Whig Liberal ticket appeared in the *Courier and Centinel*, upon the morning of the election, I consented to and advocated the immediate distribution of our ticket at the polls. It was distributed, however, only in those wards where the Liberal ticket had first made its appearance.

With regard to the second trial for the choice of representatives, I was among the first to advocate the dropping of the old list and the nomination of a new one. The new list actually nominated, was far from meeting my approval, though all things considered, it was doubtless better than the old one. After consulting with several gentlemen at a meeting called for that purpose, it was resolved, and in that resolution I fully concurred, not to do any thing towards defeating the election of that ticket. Many circumstances concurred to lead us to this resolution. We considered that the Temperance men had already elected twenty-seven of their candidates, and there was at least one on the new list, who being added would make up their full number of *twenty-eight*, upon which they had originally insisted. It might be said, and with much appearance of reason, that the irregular tickets brought out on both sides at the first election,

had dissolved the compact previously existing respecting the equal division of the ticket. Nevertheless it was judged expedient to adhere to the spirit of that agreement, more especially as the political circumstances of the Commonwealth imperiously demanded that our delegation should be full. For these reasons, no Whig temperance ticket was brought out at the second trial, and the regular candidates were elected without any serious opposition. The same motives that influenced the Temperance Whigs not to oppose those candidates at the polls, are understood to have induced the Temperance members of the Whig Convention not to oppose their nomination.

From the above statement, it is fully apparent, that the Amory Hall party has succeeded in accomplishing all the objects at which it ever aimed. It has rescued the Whig Nominating Convention from the grasp of those who had seized it, with the view of making it subservient to private and selfish purposes, wholly apart from the true ends of the Whig party. It has restored all the old usages in the election and proceedings of that body, the violation of which first called the Amory Hall Committee into existence. It has preserved one half the Whig party from a proscription with which they were threatened, and has bestowed upon them their fair share of legislative representation. It has put things back,—as far as the change of times and circumstances renders it possible to do so,—into the position in which they stood, prior to the attempt to make the Whig party of this city a mere instrument in the hands of a small and interested faction,—the faction I mean of the Ultra Liberals who, as the late election has proved, cannot command twelve hundred votes, Whig and Tory united, in the whole city.

Whether those persons, who, at the expense of much time, severe labor, and an unlimited portion of obloquy poured out upon their devoted heads, have rendered this service to the Whig party, are properly to be regarded as its friends or as its enemies, let the candid and impartial judge! To assist their judgment, I would ask them to compare the ticket *nominated* in 1838, by the Whig Convention, the greater part of which was defeated through the exertions of the Amory Hall party, with the ticket now recently *elected*, which owes its present shape as well as its election, principally to the exertions of that same party. To aid in this comparison I here subjoin the two tickets.

TICKET OF 1838.

[Those in italics were not elected.]

Joseph T. Adams.
Ivers J. Austin.
Ruel Baker.
 Amos Binney.
 Martin Brimmer.
J. Vincent Browne.
A. W. Blanchard.

TICKET OF 1839.

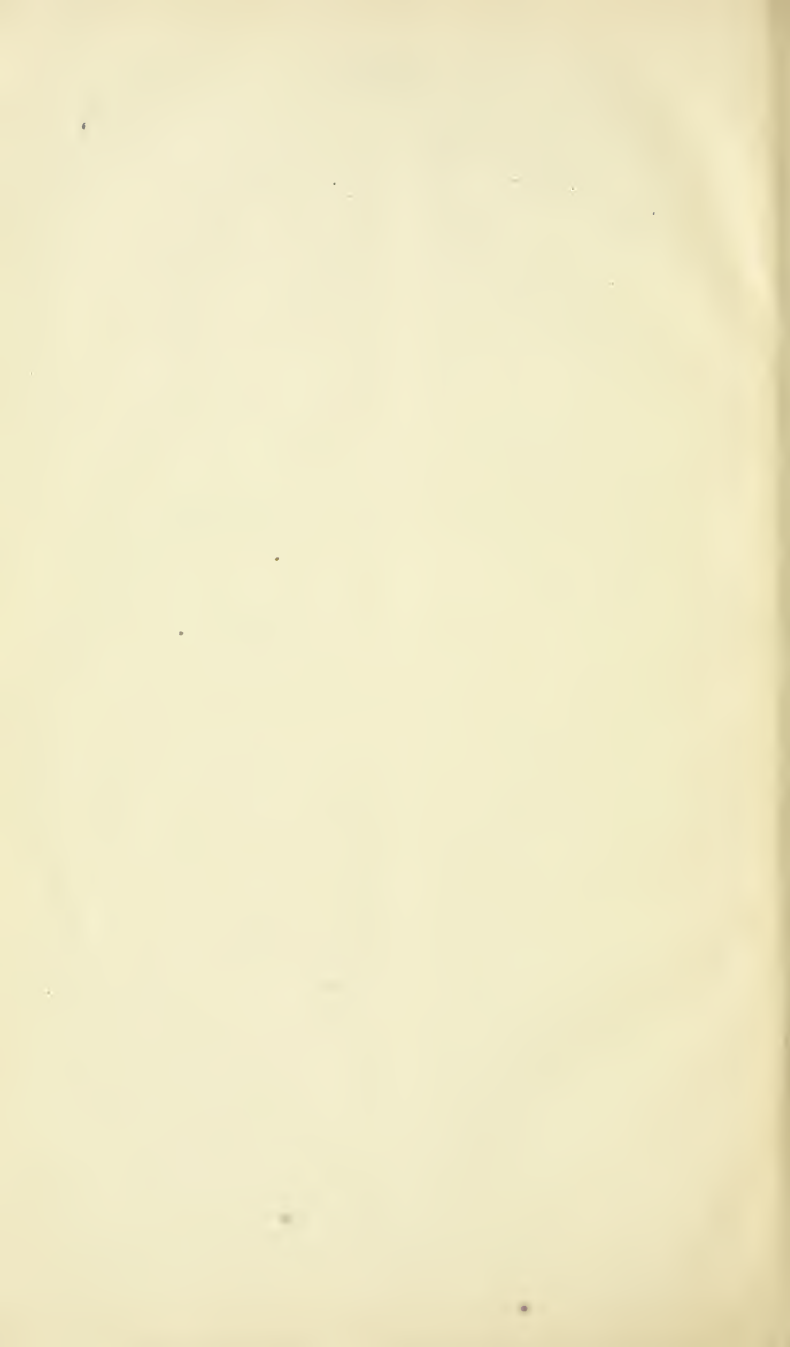
[All elected.]

Amos Binney.
 George T. Bigelow.
 William C. Brown.
 Noah Brooks.
 Francis Brown.
 John Bolles.
 George T. Curtis.

<i>Wm. Barnicoat.</i>	Daniel Denny.
<i>Samuel Chessman.</i>	Isaac P. Davis.
James Clarke.	Thomas A. Davis.
Joshua Crane.	Franklin Dexter.
<i>Lucius Doolittle.</i>	George Darracott.
Isaac P. Davis.	Frederick Emerson.
<i>Frederick Emerson.</i>	David Francis.
Joseph Eveleth.	Ozias Goodwin.
<i>Rowland Ellis.</i>	Nathan Gurney.
<i>Henry Farnham.</i>	John C. Gray,
Stephen Fairbanks.	Frederick Gould.
<i>Benj. Fiske.</i>	John Gardner.
John C. Gray.	John Green, Jr.
<i>Daniel L. Gibbens.</i>	James W. Gates.
John Green, Jr.	Samuel Greele.
<i>Samuel Greele.</i>	Thomas Hunting.
<i>Daniel Henchman.</i>	James Harris.
<i>Eliphalet P. Hartshorn.</i>	Samuel W. Hall.
<i>Enoch Hobart.</i>	John P. Healey.
<i>Prentiss Hobbs.</i>	Eliphalet P. Hartshorn.
<i>Samuel D. Harris.</i>	Robert Hooper, Jr.
<i>James Harris.</i>	Cranston Howe.
Samuel Hitchborne.	Robert Keith.
Thomas Hunting.	Benson Leavitt.
<i>Robert Keith.</i>	E. W. Leach.
<i>S. D. Leavens.</i>	Wm. Lawrence.
<i>Joseph Lewis.</i>	Joseph Lewis.
<i>George Lane.</i>	Nahum Mitchell.
<i>Thomas Motley.</i>	Theophilus R. Marvin.
Nahum Mitchell.	Thomas Patten.
David Nickerson.	Lewis G. Pray.
<i>Richard A. Newell.</i>	Theophilus Parsons.
<i>Wm. F. Parrott.</i>	Francis J. Oliver.
<i>Solomon Piper.</i>	William W. Parrott.
<i>Royal L. Porter.</i>	George W. Phillips.
<i>Brewster Reynolds.</i>	Samuel Quincy.
<i>Simon W. Robinson.</i>	John Rayner.
Jeffrey Richardson.	Jeffrey Richardson.
<i>Henry G. Rice.</i>	Joseph W. Revere.
Asa Swallow.	Daniel Safford.
Robert G. Shaw.	J. Thos. Stevenson.
<i>Lemuel Shattuck.</i>	Woodbridge Strong.
<i>Philo S. Shelton.</i>	Josiah Vinton, Jr.
Charles A. Wells.	John B. Wells.
James M. Whiton.	William Willett.
<i>Isaac Waters.</i>	Horatio M. Willis.
<i>Thomas Wetmore.</i>	Robert C. Winthrop.
<i>John B. Wells.</i>	Thomas B. Wales.
	James M. Whiton.







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